

Stewards (sides-people)

Overview of Stewarding Ministry

The people who serve as “Stewards”, (a term with biblical references particularly as noted in Luke’s Gospel and that was deemed to be non gender specific) include the various roles of Sides-people, Intercessors, Servers, Bible readers, Vergers and Welcomers. (‘Sides-people’, a modern term for ‘Sidesman’ is a recognised office of the Church of England and there are particular requirements that accompany this office. *‘It shall be the duty of the sidesmen to promote the cause of true religion in the parish and to assist the churchwardens in the discharge of their duties in maintaining order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially during the time of Divine Service’*).

The purpose of the Stewarding Ministry is to promote a strong sense of community and fellowship, be aware of and respond appropriately to the needs of the congregation. They work together to perform specific tasks and duties to ensure the orderly running of the services.

Qualifications

Stewards shall be on the electoral roll and/or regularly worshipping members of the congregation. Sides-people are voted into office at the Annual Parish Meeting. Any necessary topping-up of sides-people numbers during the course of the year must be done with the authority of the PCC.

Training

Stewards are expected to attend at least one annual training, refreshing and review event. These will usually take place during September. Stewards should also be aware of their own training needs and calling and be prepared to discuss these with the group and/or Parish Priest.

Organisation

Assignments and duties shall be allocated on a Service Rota in conjunction with the Parish Priest. At the present time Stewards will carry out all tasks in this section, though some functions have been separated. For the purposes of this document the ‘steward role’ overlaps with the Welcomer. This way there should be at least two people available to meet and greet people. The Steward though has additional tasks.

Roles

- If you are on duty please arrive in good time (ie at least 30 minutes before the service is due to start) to be organised and ready to greet other worshippers as they arrive.
- Help set up the church ready for worship
- Pray with welcomer about the imminent service/visitors etc
- To be aware of the needs of people and act upon them, particularly if those ‘on duty’ are fully engaged with people.
- Respect the atmosphere of the church. Be welcoming but not overwhelming. (Eye contact and a smile are important).
- Be aware of any special facilities for the disabled (ramps, hearing loops, large print books etc...).
- Be attentive to the particular needs of young children.
- Give out the right book(s) and paper(s) if any.

- Know how to provide access for lavatories. Know where the church's bucket and mop are?!
- Know how to deal with a fire or other emergency; eg where are the fire extinguishers? Where are the exit points?
- Help people to find an appropriate seat. Don't put new people at the very front.
- Make sure you know (and have rehearsed) the arrangements for receiving the offering.
- Direct people to receive Holy Communion - do so with courtesy but in a quiet and undemanding way.
- Clearing-up at the end of the service, including items used for 'coffee' afterwards, liaising with the hospitality team.
- With another steward count the money, and complete forms all as directed by the Treasurer - noting that the envelopes for Saint Stephen's (blue) are kept separately - and put all in safe.
- Make sure that visitors/new people are introduced to the priest or Churchwarden and/or contact details are taken.